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14 January 1956

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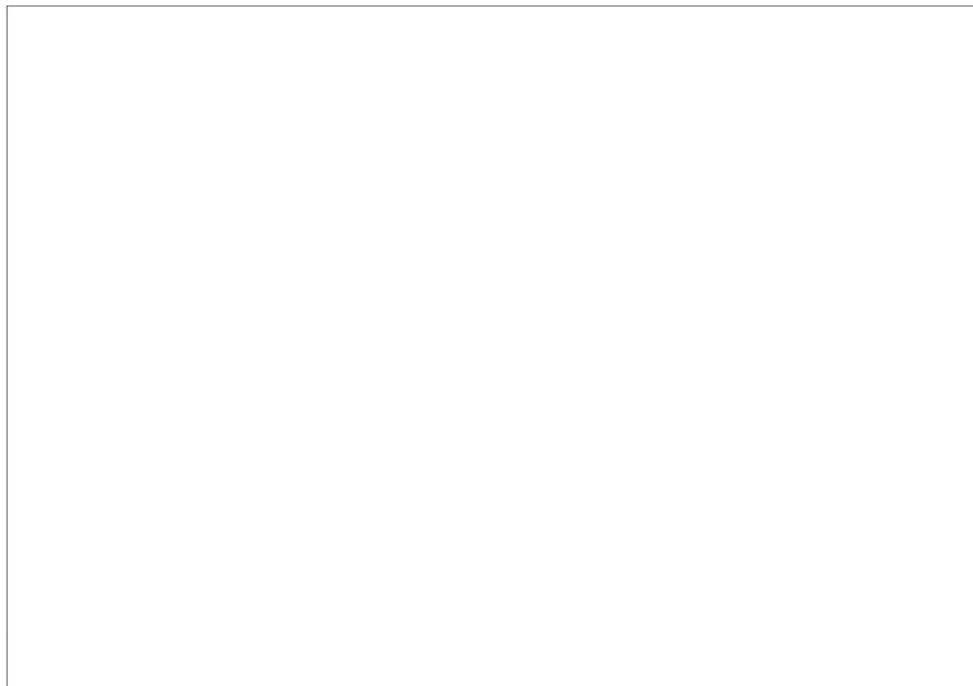
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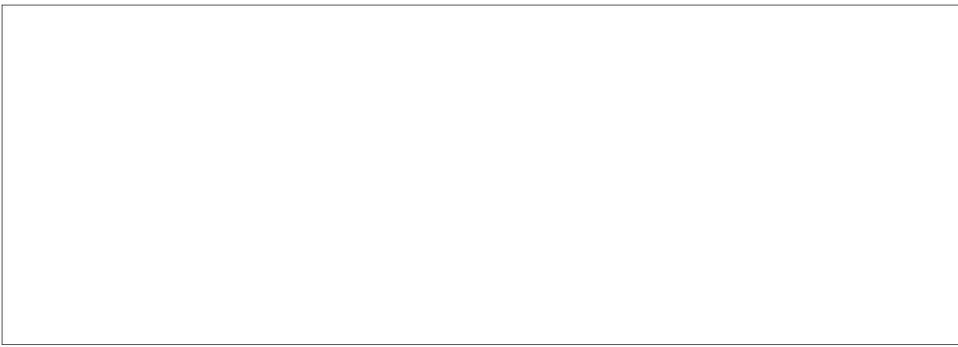
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1. JORDAN MAY BE FORCED TO ACCEPT ARAB AID OFFER

The American embassy in Amman believes that the situation in Jordan has deteriorated to such an extent that an offer even of substantial aid from the West probably would not enable King Hussain to reject a subsidy in the amount reported to have been offered by Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The British Foreign Office, however, appears confident that the king will decline the offer, although it believes another outbreak of rioting would follow an announcement of such a decision.

The Foreign Office told the American embassy in London that Iraqi prime minister Nuri is undecided on his reply to Hussain's request that Iraqi troops stand by to help restore order in Jordan. The British Foreign Office implied that British troops from Cyprus rather than Iraqi forces would be used in an emergency. Jordanian Arab Legion leader Glubb, according to the Foreign Office, has reported that 3,000 Saudi troops, mostly irregulars, are grouped at Kaf, near the Jordanian border, presumably ready to enter Jordan if the situation deteriorates further.

Comment

The three Arab states reportedly proposed on 11 January to give Jordan the equivalent of \$280,000,000 over a ten-year period--a sum about \$70,000,000 less than Jordan would receive from Britain over the same period--if present arrangements with Britain continued. It would seem unlikely that Hussain can afford to reject the Arab offer outright. His decision will probably depend primarily on his government's ability to maintain order in the next few days.

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2. SOURCES OF POUJADE'S BACKING

[redacted] The Poujade antitax movement, which gained 52 seats in the French assembly in the election on 2 January, is directed and supported by rightist military and ex-Vichy elements in France and French settlers in North Africa. [redacted] Poujade has financial support from a known World War II collaborator with the Nazis. [redacted] Poujade has also received financial aid from the French settlers in North Africa.

The settlers' link to Poujade will greatly increase the new government's difficulty in finding a solution to the Algerian problem and might result in violence in both Metropolitan France and North Africa.

[redacted]

Comment

Some of the movement's leaders have made strong anti-American statements because of France's loss of influence and control in North Africa. French settlers are bitterly opposed to Mendes-France. The press reported violent Poujadist action against a Radical Socialist Congress in Algeria on 11 January. A newly elected Mendes-France supporter from Paris had to seek police protection.

Semi-fascists, ultranationalists, and colonial extremists were held in check in the Gaullist Rally, but their influence may have freer rein in the Poujadist movement.

3. POPULAR REPUBLICANS OPPOSE CONCEPT OF MINORITY FRENCH GOVERNMENT

The Popular Republican Party (MRP) announced on 12 January that it will oppose the formation of a minority government by the Republican Front.

An MRP leader told an American official in Paris on 10 January that his party attributes most of the pressure for a minority government to propaganda by Mendes-France supporters aimed at securing more influence in a wider coalition. The source intimated that negotiations are taking place between Mollet's Socialists and MRP leaders, who apparently anticipate a shift in the next week or so toward a government with a broader base.

The MRP tentatively plans to support a Socialist-led government, but its leaders object that one headed by Mendes-France would be short-lived and a prelude to "great chaos."

Comment

The Socialists and the MRP are the parties most likely to be able to form a bridge between the hostile center blocs. Despite Mollet's strong public insistence on a minority Republican Front government, both Socialist and MRP leaders have shown an inclination since the 2 January elections to seek a rapprochement.

The MRP's public statement will oblige Mollet and Mendes-France to clarify their position. Paris observers had previously assumed that the MRP would acquiesce in a narrowly based coalition led by a Socialist or a Mendes-France Radical and supported by the Communists on some domestic issues.

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4. COMMUNIST-SUPPORTED POPULAR FRONT MAY BE FORMED FOR GREEK ELECTIONS

[REDACTED]

The drift of Greek center parties toward co-operation with the Communist-front EDA in the national elections scheduled for 19 February appears to be accelerating. If this culminates in a formal EDA-supported Popular Front to oppose Prime Minister Karamanlis' right-of-center National Radical Union, the forces in the election may be nearly equal.

George Papandreou, anti-Communist chief of the Liberal Party, had "virtually decided" by 12 January to co-operate with EDA as the only alternative to political extinction, [REDACTED]. The Liberal leader reportedly believes center parties no longer have vote-getting appeal and that no one of them will be able to poll the 15 percent of the total vote required to win a parliamentary seat. The leaders of the other established center parties, this source reported, share Papandreou's views. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 13 January)

Israel has charged that Egyptians fired on an Israeli patrol along the Gaza strip and that antiaircraft fire was opened on an Israeli plane near the El Auja zone, but no casualties were reported. (Press)

The commander in chief of the Egyptian navy has told the American naval attaché in Cairo that he does not believe Israel will attempt to force the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba, but that if Israel does so it will mean war. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Egypt intends to establish a torpedo boat force at Sharm el Sheikh, the Egyptian headquarters at the mouth of the gulf. The new force apparently will arrive under escort of a frigate detailed to relieve the patrol craft now on guard duty there. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On 11 January the American army attaché in Cairo identified five Soviet T-34 medium tanks proceeding cross-country to a firing range in the Suez Canal Zone. The attaché reports that, [REDACTED] a sizable but unknown number of Soviet medium tanks are at Shallufa, a station on the railway which parallels the canal. This is the first sighting of Soviet ground equipment in use by the Egyptians. [REDACTED]

The Soviet merchant vessel Krasnodar, which had given a false destination as it passed Istanbul, arrived at Alexandria on 11 January with a deck cargo of large wooden crates. This makes five Soviet freighters which have delivered arms from Soviet Black Sea ports to Egypt since the beginning of the year and a total of 12 arms cargoes which have been carried to Egypt by Soviet freighters since deliveries began on 22 October. Cargo unloaded by the five ships arriving since 1 January has reportedly included fighter and bomber aircraft with spare parts, heavy and light tanks, heavy and light guns, rifles and bayonets, clothing, and other supplies. One of the vessels, the General Chernakovsky, also reportedly discharged six LCM-type landing craft, each 50 to 60 feet long, which had been carried as deck cargo.